Three pronged strategy to boost tourism

579. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a three pronged strategy has been formulated recently in consultation with the representatives of the airlines, hotels and travel industry to give boost to tourism to counter the grim situation arising out of the recent terrorist attacks on the United States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of the proposal for visa-on-arrival announced recently?

THE MIN ISTER OF TOURISM AN D CULTURE (SHRI J AGMOHAN): (a) Ministry of Tourism in consultation with the travel trade, hotels and airlines has discussed strategy to counter the downtrend following the recent terrorist attacks on the United States.

(b) Efforts have also been made to send appropriate signals to countries all over the world that India is a safe destination. A reorientation in marketing efforts is also being made by focussing on less effected markets and reorienting the trade and industry to the potential of domestic tourism.

(c) The present status of the proposal on visa>on-arrival is that the prodcedure and modalities for its implementation are being worked out in consultation with other Ministries.

Low ranking in tourism sector

580. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(«) whether it is a fact that India ranks 153 out of 160 countries in terms of Government spending on Tourism;

(b) whether as compared to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka only 2.64 million tourists came to India last year; and

(c) if so, the concrete steps taken at a recently held Conference of Chief Ministers and Tourism Ministers in New Delhi for attraction of foreign tourists coordination between the States and Centre in this field to control variation in hotel tax from one State to another and to enact laws for 'cleanliness' as in other countries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) India is ranked, in terms of Government spending, as 153rd amongst 160 countries studied by the World Tourism and Travel Council.

(b) The tourist arrivals to India during the year 2000 were 2.64 million.

(c) The Conference of Chief Ministers and State Tourism Ministers was convened to discuss and obtain the views of the State/UT Governments on draft National Tourism Policy, restructuring the Central financial assistance guidelines, unformity and rationalisation of State Government taxes on tourism units, providing a constitutional status to tourism and product development and marketing. The Government's decision to constitute a Tourism Advisory Council at national level which would facilitate interaction amongst the various stakeholders in the tourism sector was announced in the Conference.

Development of tourism in Assam

581. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to develop tourism in some areas of Assam with the foreign assistance; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Tourism Projects of Andhra Pradesh

582. DR. DASARINARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prioritised any tourism projects of Andhra Pradesh in consultation with the State Government for the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the current status of these projects; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any steps to promote tourism in Andhra Pradesh?